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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/993,488	11/27/2001	Jim Yew-Wah Ho	2019.222	7118

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EXAMINER

MORAN, TIMOTHY J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2878

DATE MAILED: 12/15/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/993,488

Applicant(s)

HO, JIM YEY-WAH

Examiner

Timothy J. Moran

Art Unit

2878

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6, 8-15 and 17-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 7 and 16 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) encl. 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

The listing of references in the specification is not a proper information disclosure statement. 37 CFR 1.98(b) requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office, and MPEP § 609 A(1) states, "the list may not be incorporated into the specification but must be submitted in a separate paper." Therefore, unless the references have been cited by the examiner on form PTO-892, they have not been considered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 1-6, 8-9, and 17-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ho, U. S. Patent No. 5,895,922. Regarding claims 1, 3, and 17-19, Ho describes a fluorescence apparatus comprising a laser diode (20, col. 9, lines 1-8) which emits light with wavelength approximately equal to 340 nm (abstract), wherein the apparatus establishes whether or not a particle is biologically viable (abstract) and comprises a photon counter (col. 8, lines 1-4) and a microprocessor (col. 8, lines 12-22).

Regarding claims 2 and 4-6, Ho teaches the excitation of NADH and flavinoids (col. 3, lines 36-37).

Regarding claim 8, Ho describes means for measuring particle size and establishing if a particle is within a range of particles which are respirable (col. 9, lines 17-19).

Regarding claim 9, Ho describes a time-of-flight measurement instrument (col. 6, lines 25-30).

Regarding claims 20-24, the methods described are inherent the use of the inventions 1-6, 8-9, and 17-19.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 10-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ho, U. S. Patent No. 5,895,922. Regarding claims 10, 12, and 14, Ho teaches the use of a diode laser with a power of 30 mW. However, the amount of laser power is considered a design choice driven by many factors, such as power availability and heat dissipation. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use a beam in the range of 8-15 mW in the apparatus of Ho for the advantage of efficient fluorescence detection.

Regarding claims 11, 13, and 15, Ho teaches the excitation of NADH and flavinoids (col. 3, lines 36-37).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 7 and 16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: Claims 7 and 16 include limitations regarding the wavelength of excitation light which are not described in prior art documents such as Ho (US 5,895,922).

Conclusion


The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Chang, U. S. Patent No. 6,532,067, describes an apparatus for determining particle characteristics comprising an excitation source (diode lasers 1 and 2, fig. 1) and a fluorescence detector (PMT's 40 and 50, col. 4, lines 15-19).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Timothy J. Moran whose telephone number is 703-305-0849. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Porta can be reached on 703-308-4852. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9318.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0956.

T.M.
TM
November 28, 2003


CONSTANTINE HANNAHER
PRIMARY EXAMINER
GROUP ART UNIT 2878